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DESCRIPTION
OF A
NEW IMPROVED CHART
OF THE
ISLANDS OF SHETLAND

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED
THREE COPPER PLATES WITH THE APPEARANCES
OF THE LAND

AND
A SPECIAL CHART
OF

VALEY-SOUND,
A HARBOUR ON THAT COAST

PUBLISHED
FROM THE ROYAL DANISH MARINE ARCHIVES FOR
DRAUGHTS AND CHARTS

BY
P. de LÖWENÖRN,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL, CAPTAIN-LIEUTENANT, AND DIRECTOR
OF THE ARCHIVES
1787.

Price one Danish dollar.

COPENHAGEN,
printed by FRIDERIC WILLIAM THIEL.





On an Expedition in the Northern seas last year, J had an opportunity to make several Observations, in passing by the *Islands of Shetland*; and having found them so very wrongly and differently placed, as to Latitude and Longitude, in all the usual Sea-Charts, and likewise greatly disfigured, J thought it important to publish the present improved one.

As to the configuration of these Islands, J have with little or no alteration chosen to follow an English Chart called: *A new hydrographical survey of the Islands of Shetland, by Captain Thomas Preston, with many improvements and additions and the sailing directions.* London. printed for R. Sayer and Bennett. Decemb. 1781. For in sailing all along and partly round these Islands, J could by this Chart know every Point, Island, Inlet &c., and found the Bearings from one Point to another in many respects very exact. But as to the Latitude and the extent of the Islands, J found it extremely incorrect. What still more surprized me, was that the Chart did not agree with the already known Observations. One of the most remarkable, is that made by Captain Phibbs on his voyage to the North Pole in the Year 1773. He determines the Latitude of *Noss-Head* or *Hanz-Cliff*, a very remarkable Head-Land on the Island *Noss*, on the East side of *Shetland* to be $60^{\circ} 9'$; and its Longitude $0^{\circ} 56' 30''$ to the West of the Meridian of Greenwich. In the Chart it is placed at $60^{\circ} 17'$ Latitude; consequently there is a difference of

8 minutes. Almost the same may be said with regard to *Foul-Island*, which is nearly situated under the same parallel on the West side of *Shetland*, but at some distance from the Coast.

This Chart places the middle of it, at $60^{\circ} 12'$ Latitude; but according to *Mr. Kerguelen de Tremarec's* (1) it lies at $60^{\circ} 3'$; which agrees very exactly with an Observation made by my self, whereby J found the Latitude of the Northern Point to be $60^{\circ} 4' 20''$, and consequently the error is here $9'$.

As to *Fair-Isle* (2) *Mr. Kerguelen* says: that he took particular care to ascertain its Latitude, and found it to be $59^{\circ} 27'$. For my part J could not make any Observation in that respect, for want of clear weather; but from the evening that J was 2 or 3 miles right East cor: from the middle of *Fair-Isle*, and to the next morning, J stood exactly West cor: at a distance of about 10 miles from the South Point of *Foul-Island*, J had steer'd 39° North by West cor: and the sailed distance was 47 miles; which answers very exactly, when these two islands are placed under the here mentioned Latitudes. But then, according to the Scale J made use of in drawing this Chart, (and for which J shall explain my reasons in the sequel) *Foul-Island* must lie about 4 miles farther off from the Coast of *Shetland*, than it would do, had J only copied the English Chart. To this J was induced by several Bearings J observed of this Island to the opposite shore. And as a farther confirmation hereof, J have found in a Journal of a Danish East Indiaman, an Observation made for ascertaining the respective positions of the three Points, *Foul-Island*, the *South Point of Shetland* and *Fair-Isle*. This observation agrees strictly with the position J have allowed the said Points; only that this seems to place *Foul-Island* a little more Northerly than the abovementioned Observations.

Have

(1) vid. Relation d'un voyage dans la mer du Nord &c. fait en 1767-1768 par. Mr. de Kerguelen Tremarec; Paris 1771 pag. 153.

(2) On account of the pronunciation, it is called in the Danish Chart *Fair-Hill*. *Shetland* is spelled *Hetland*; and so on, for a few more names.

Have the Grind Rocks, J have set down according to their position from *Foul-Island*, as in the English Chart.

On my return home J fell in with the Coast of *Shetland* on the Northern side, where J made an Observation, that placed *Ronar Hill* or *Blueberg* at $60^{\circ} 32'$ Latitude. In the English Chart it lies at $60^{\circ} 52'$, an error of $20'$.

Ronar Hill is a very high mountain, and may therefore in clear weather be seen at a great distance even over the Land, when Eastwards from *Shetland*.

I continued sailing and observing along the Coast Northwards; and by the English Chart J could know and name every point as J passed. The Bearings seemed to answer very well; but at the same time my sailed Distance quite puzzled me, when pointing in the English Chart. Night coming on, J kept cruising till next morning with the intention to make more Observations. The following day J was so happy by fair weather, to observe the Latitude of *Lambuist*, a small flat island lying close before the Northernmost Point of the Island *Unst*, the most northerly of the *Islands of Shetland*, to be $60^{\circ} 45' 30''$. Mr. Kerguelen did also observe the Latitude of the North Point of *Shetland*, and found it $60^{\circ} 44'$; but when he made this Observation, he was 12 miles distant, and of course he could only see the Highland, which is about one minute and a half within *Lambuist*. J on the contrary, was near enough to see the lowest Point, and our Observations agree very strictly; whereas the English Chart places this Point at $61^{\circ} 15'$ Latitude; a surprizing difference, that might extremely mislead any Seaman, who according to this Chart intended to fall in with it.

The next following day J made again an Observation close under the *Out-Sherries*, some small Islands or Rocks lying at a little distance from *Shetland* on the East side. According to this, the Northern one lies at $60^{\circ} 28'$ and a few seconds. In the English Chart it is placed at $60^{\circ} 48'$; again a difference of 20 minutes. The weather was on that day foggy by intervals; in so much that J could have no Bearings of the Land itself. Towards noon it cleared up but foul weather soon after setting in, J was obliged to pursue my voyage.

These are the direct Observations J have made on the *Islands of Shetland*. By comparing them with the Latitudes indicated in the Chart, J could not at first conceive, how it were possible, that, the Latitudes being so very incorrect, and much more so on the Northern side than on the South, yet the Form of the Land did not thereby appear entirely altered; that notwithstanding, J had been able to know all the Points according to the Chart, and moreover, that on several places the Bearings of two points at once agreed very exactly.

After several combinations, the Time-keepers J had on board, led me at last, J think, to the true reason. J had made an Observation on the Longitude the 24th. of August in the afternoon at 3 o' clock, when J bore in with *Ronas Hill* on the West side of *Shetland*; and likewise one the 25th. under the *Island of Unst*, and the 26th. in the sight of the *Out Skerries*. In reducing these to the nearest point of Land in sight, J found by the difference of the Meridian, that the breadth of the Land here, was set down in the Chart, exceeding by one third its real extent; and in taking, with regard to the Scale of Latitude, *Captain Phibb's* Observations on *Noss-head*, and mine on *Lambeg's* for my basis, J found exactly the same proportion, viz. that the Land was set down after a Scale $\frac{1}{3}$ part too small; that is to say: Three minutes on that, will very nearly answer to two in reality of this improved Scale. On this account, J have drawn the annexed *improved Chart of the Islands of Shetland*, agreeing in every respect with the abovementioned English one, as to the configuration of these Islands; only with that exception: that *Foul-Island* is set down a little more distant from the Land; and farther, that by placing the whole Land according to the Scale here enlarged by one third, the Latitude of the South Point, of the Land called *Scant-Ness*, comes at $59^{\circ} 52'$; in the English Chart it is set down at $59^{\circ} 50'$, which J also have followed, tho' not in the least determined by this assertion. But in *Robertson's Navigation*, which also ascertains the exact Latitude of the North Point, it is placed at $59^{\circ} 50'$; and the abovementioned Observations of the Danish East-Indiamen, the Bearings of which mutually agree, state the same Latitude. After all, it would be less a mistake in any regard, were it even set down in the Chart, a little too much to the South.

Accor-

According to this adopted new Scale, the Latitudes of the *Out Skerries*, on the one, and of *Ronas Hill* on the other side, agree very strictly with my direct Observations. As to the latter, there is a difference of little more than one minute; the new Scale placing it in my Chart so much more to the South. But who can pretend to the nicety of one minute, in Observations made on board a ship? From this reason, and on account of the other proportions, J did not think proper to make any alteration on this head.

As to the Longitudes assigned in this Chart, J have placed *Nofs-head* by the abovementioned Observations of *Captain Phibbs* at $6^{\circ} 56' 30''$ to the West of *Greenwich*; and the rest do in consequence depend on the new adopted Scale. But on considering the Observations of Longitude J made my self, with the Time-keepers J had on board, J should rather suppose the whole to be a few minutes more Westerly; which however can be of no importance, especially in this high Latitude, where the minutes of Longitude are so small.

Although this Chart is, like the English Original, drawn after a plain Scale; yet as the whole Chart does not contain more than about one degree and a half in Latitude, J have for the greater convenience set down Scales of Longitude, the degrees of which are marked from *Copenhagen*, *Greenwich*, *Paris* and *Pico*; and these answering to the middle of the Chart, cannot produce any errors of consequence at both ends.



It is very important for those, who sail either from *Norway* to *Shetland*, or from thence to *Norway*, that its situation be exactly determined; not only with regard to the particular Points relative to themselves, but especially to the distance from the Coast of *Norway*; in which the general Charts of the *North-Sea*, besides their disfiguring the Land itself, so widely differ. The old Dutch Charts place *Shetland* between 45 and 50 Leagues westwards from the Coast of *Norway*. In my opinion, as far as it can be yet determined, J think, that 54 or 55 is nearly the exact distance East and West between *Nofs-head* and the nearest Coast of *Norway*. But the newest Chart of the *North Sea* viz. an English one of J. Thomson from the Year 1777, admits a distance of about 68 Leagues. A Danish Chart by one *Huegh*, has the same error, and gives besides these Islands an other figure.

J must

J must not forbear observing, that when J was on the East side of the *Island of Unst*, it appeared to me, as the several Bearings J made that day to different Points, or Cross Bearings, did not fully answer in the Chart; in so much that it may be hence concluded, they were not exactly set down at the respective Bearings and Distances. J am however obliged to acknowledge as before, that J could know every thing by the Chart as J passed by. The Current too may have contributed to the seeming errors of the Bearings, as not answering from the different stations, especially as J happened to make my Observations two days after New Moon, when 'tis Spring Tide and the Current strongest. From this reason J shall not presume to apply these Bearings towards making any alterations on this head, but leave it so as determined by the English Chart.

Some fishermen who came on board, told me, that the Flood which began that day to set in at about 8 o' clock, turned round the North Point, running first to South East, and afterwards along the shore to the South; consequently the Ebb must run to the North. On the other Side of the North Point of the Main, the Current runs likewise along the shore; that is: the Ebb sets about North East eorr: and the Flood the opposite way.

J found by several good Observations, the variation on the West side of the *Islands of Shetland* to be $26^{\circ} 10'$ to $20'$; on the East side $25^{\circ} 30'$ to $40'$ Northwestrings.

In the English Chart are set down several Appearances of Land, to which J have joined some more and collected them here together on three sheets. The Mark , shews where two pieces should be joined, as their Length did not permit to place them in one; and  signifies a perfect separation. J shall still further observe; that as to the Bearings of the Appearances of Land in the English Chart, J have reduced them to the now being variation of about 26° ; they are also all of them reckoned on the Compass according to this variation. In the English Chart the variation was set down to be $20^{\circ} 15'$; but already in the Year 1781, it was certainly more.

In a corner of the English Chart is placed a special one of *Valley-Sound*, which J have annexed here on a little separate plate, and from which J have likewise copied the following

Direct-



Directions for Valey-Sound:

To fail in at the entrance called *East-Sound* (which is the safest and widest) when coming from the Westward with the wind at W., at S. W. or at S. steer in for the S. E. end of *Valey-Island*, which is a high and bold Land; upon the High Land on the Main you will see a large, round old *Pill's Castle*, that is a very good mark; Leave *Flaß-Island*, which is a bold, barren Rock on the Starboard side, and steer N. by W. and N. N. W. nearly into *Valey-Sound*; where you will see a large Island, called *Linga*; which you must leave on the Starboard side. Haul up to the Northward, and you may anchor in 6, 8 or 10 fathoms, good ground; observing not to come too near to the West shore for fear of the *Sunken Rocks*.

To come in at the *West-Sound*, the course is E. by N. There is a sunken Rock in the very middle of the outpart of the entrance, over which there is water enough for a small ship, tho' the sea breaks on it, because there is deep water round it. You may go on either side, and as you run in, keep over towards the Main or North side, to avoid a blind Rock, which is opposite to a Booth or Warehouse that stands near the Water side on the Island. This Rock lies nearest to the Island or South shore, and near to a small Island or Rock, whereon stands a lime kiln, and is also on your Starboard side. When you are past two small Islands on your Larboard side, haul to the Northward and anchor as before. This Harbour has the best outlet of any on the West side of the Coast.

If you are designed for *Grueting-Voe*, the old *Pill's Castle* on the hill is the best mark; which keep on the Starboard side. Steer boldly in between *Flaß-Island* and *Valey-Island* leaving *Valey-Sound* on the Larboard side. The entrance of *Grueting-Voe*, does not discover itself till you get the length of *Green-Head*. This entrance or Channel is narrow, but has deep water, so that you may haul boldly round, borrowing on the North shore and steer up N. E. by E. or N. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. into the said *Voe* where you may anchor from 14 to 7 fathoms water, and lie landlock'd.

Several other Directions are mentioned in the English Chart which will also be found here annexed; and at the same time, I have thought proper to add those laid down in *Colin's Great Britain's Coasting Pilot*.

Lerwick is the principal place on the *Islands of Shetland*, having a good and spacious Harbour. The entrance of *Brassa-Sound*, is easily known by the Islands of *Brassa* and *Nofs*, which are remarkable Lands. You may boldly sail into the Sound, there being no danger; run a little to the Northward of the town, and towards the *Castle* nearest to the West side, then anchor in 6, 8 or 10 fathoms. In Spring Tide the water falls and rises about 8 and else 5 feet; the Current is not very strong; the Ebb sets to the North, and the Flood to the South. In the Northern entrance the Current is somewhat stronger. If you will sail out that way, you had best weighing anchor about with two thirds of the Flood; you must keep nearest to the West side, till you are past a small Island, called *Holm of Cruisler*, to avoid a sunken Rock called *Loafabar*. When you come more Northwards, to the first narrow passage, there is a middle Bank, on which with low water, is but 12 feet; you may keep on either side, but the best is to the West side, where you may go pretty near the shore; then you get a broader Channel, but is soon narrowed again. Here it is necessary to steer well and keep near the Main side, and a Rock called *Scotland*, in order to avoid some sunken Rocks, that lie on the *Brassa* side. Being out between the *Brethren* and *Beofter*, you have a bold passage.

Between the Island of *Brassa* and the Head Land called *Noul of Erwick*, lie four safe Harbours, viz. *Deals-Voe*, *Laxfirth-Voe*, *Wadbeffer's-Voe* and the Northernmost *Catfirth-Voe*, being the largest and the best; for there you ride Landlocked for all winds, and you may anchor in what depth of water you please from 3 to 14 fathoms clear ground. The entrance into these Bays is not difficult; if you chuse, you may pass in the middle, between the *Bethren* and *Green-Island*, having the latter on Starboard; you must be careful of a Rock on Larboard, called *Toaground*. It is to be seen at half Tide; you may also go between *Green-Island* and *Giltnefs-Island*.

Sum-

Sumburg-Head is the South part of *Shetland*; between that and *Fitfill-Head* are three Bays; whereof *Queendals Bay* is the largest and best, and easy to sail in and out; you may anchor from 6 to 8 fathoms. The sea is open but to four points of the Compass. A little Westward of *Sumburg-Head*, is a small Bay, called *West-Voe*, where you may anchor from 7 to 8 fathoms, being safe for all winds except from the South to the South East.

Northward of *Sumburg-Head* is a Bay called *East-Voe* and lieth to S. S.W. having a good Road for all winds but for the N. E. As you sail in or out, you must keep a Cable's Length from the shore. There is an other Bay in this Bay, more Northwards (withour doubt the *Pool*) having but 4 feet water.

If you are going farther to the North on the East side, there is an Inlet, where are two Bays. The first is *Lewenwick*; as soon as you are past *Cumla-Nest*, and the Bay opens, you sail in and anchor from 7 to 8 fathoms. The other is *Sandwick*, which runs in North, and is a little Bay, where you anchor in 7 fathoms.

Between *Musa Island* and the Main is a Channel; Northwards from it is *Aeths-Voe*, having but 10 to 12 feet water. From *Sumburg-Head* to *No-Nest* the Flood runs Northwards, but from *No-Nest* to *Brafsy Island* Southwards, and the Ebb to the contrary.

On the West side of *Shetland*, about four miles from *Fitfill-Head*, lies the *Island St. Ninian*. This Island is join'd to the Main by a little Isthmus of sand, which is overflowed at some high Tides. To the South of the Isthmus, and within the Island is a fair sandy Bay, where is a good Road to anchor in 7 to 9 fathoms; you may also ride Northwards of this Isthmus, with Easterly and Southerly winds.

To sail into *Clift-Sound*, you have *Havery Islands* on the Larboard side, going boldly into the Sound and steering about N. by E. corr. *Tingwall church* will be your leading mark, in seeing it on the East side of *Tondray Island*, and
you

you may anchor any where from 18 to 5 fathoms. When you are a breast of *Tondray Island* and intend to go up to *Scalloway*, you must haul close to the East shore, to sail over the Bar, on which there is but 12 feet at high water and which you then shall pass. There are still three other entrances to *Scalloway*, viz. *North Channel*, *Middle Channel* and the *South Channel*, which is the best and plainest, between the *Islands of Oxna and Burra*. You bring the Castle in N. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. cor: which course you must steer in, keeping the Castle just open to the Southward of *Green Island*, which is round and high. This is a good leading mark, which carries you between *Green Island* and *Merry Holm* in 4 fathoms of water; when you are past through, haul off, down in the harbour, before the town, where you will get 5 to 6 fathoms water, clear sandy ground.

Somewhat Northerly on the same side of the Main, is the large Bay of *St. Magnus*; if you fall into it with a Westerly wind, and cannot get out, the best way to save the Ship is to run in at *Swabuck's Mine*, between the Islands of *Muckle Roe* and *Vermantree*; this is an Inlet to several good Harbours and you may anchor any where within these Islands.

These are the Directions mentioned by *Collin* and in the Chart. To judge from the latter, there must undoubtedly also be good Harbours and Roads on the Northern part of the *Islands of Shetland*, if they were but known. *Balta-Sound* on the East side of the *Island Unst*, is doubtless a very good Harbour and easy to enter; at least the Fishermen who were on board, assured me of it, offering themselves as Pilots.

Lastly J have in a Vignette beneath the title, represented the manner of fowling on *Nof's Head*; see Pennant's *Arctic Zoology*, or *European Magazine* for May 1780.

I shall conclude with the wish, that the improvements made in this Chart may be found as correct as useful; but as to those parts where J could not have any Observations or good Leadings, J hope for a kind indulgence.

Est quodam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.

Hor.



680542



a Fairhall 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra N. om ad W. 5 Mils



a Fygd Head 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ 30 fra N. om ad S. 5 Mils . b. Swanbury Head .



Foulie a. 50 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra S. ad S. b. 40 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra S. om ad S. 5 Mils .



Foulie . 79 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra N. om ad S. 5 Mils .
a



Foulie a S. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 10 Mils .



Ranna Stake a 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra S. ad W. 5 Mils .

A. A. Flint





amer Øster fra. a. Fyßill Head.



a. Fyßill fra N. ad W. c. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra N. ad W. 3 Mile.



af Waller 63 $\frac{1}{2}$ fra N. om ad Ø.



naar





